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have a picture approaching almost to perfection.

J. B. Irving is at work on another of those delightful little *genre* pictures, in the treatment of which he is so happy. A little urchin *en dishabille*, with stick in hand, is just about to pounce upon a mouse, who has been committing some depredation and now sits quietly enjoying his plunder. The subject is a trifling one, but it gives Mr. Irving an opportunity to revel in a vast amount of careful and elaborate detail. In subjects of this character, Mr. Irving is without a rival, and his last effort is fully up to his usual standard.

Constant Mayer is at work on an exquisite *genre* picture, which he calls "Love's Messenger." It is the old story of the poetic dove and love letter. Mr. Mayer has treated his subject with rare delicacy; and, as he always does, managed to infuse into it a deal of poetry. The picture is purely classical, and a fine opportunity for color and design is afforded by the Pompeian architecture, of which Mr. Mayer has not neglected to avail himself.

Edwin White, who has just returned from his summer trip at West Springfield, Mass., has on his easel a remarkably pleasing picture, which he calls the "Country Post Office." It is full of sunlight, color, and home-like naturalness. In all Mr. White's pictures we trace the conscientious worker and the gentleman of refinement. There is never anything gross or exaggerated in his ideas, but always a fidelity to nature and an apparent love for what is beautiful and good. Mr. White will soon begin a large picture, for which he has already drawn the cartoon, of the "Signing of the Bond, on board the Mayflower," an incident in American history which will doubtless prove interesting in a picture.

Grenville Perkins has on the easel a fine picture of the "Pacific Coast," in which there is some uncommonly good sky and water painting. The great fault in Mr. Perkins' painting heretofore has been an unpleasant prominence of purple tones: these he appears to be getting rid of now, and is painting some thoroughly good pictures; good alike in treatment as in color.

The cold snap has brought many of the artists home to their winter quarters, and the studios are beginning to assume their natural appearance once more, being no longer the cold, blank, dreary and inanimate things they were during the summer. It is a merry season, this return of the artists, and keeps the critic remarkably busy: new sketches are to be looked at, new pictures criticised, new men praised or picked to pieces, new ideas developed, and news, generally collected, sifted down, and made available.

PALETTE.

MATTERS THEATRIC.

"Myrrha," the most revolting, and at the same time most powerful, of Italian plays, was presented at the French Theatre on Monday evening, with Madame Ristori in the title rôle. This is the part in which she dethroned Rachel from the hearts of the Parisians, and which stamped her in Europe as the now acknowledged Queen of Tragedy. It is almost to be regretted that she has not enacted the character before in this country. It is her masterpiece—the culmination of tragic acting.

The plot of "Myrrha" is familiar to all play-goers. Myrrha, like Phædra, is the victim of the vengeance of Venus, who for a supposed slight to her power inspires the unfortunate girl with a sickening and unholy passion, the object being her own father. A subject such as this, revolting in its idea, required the genius of an Alfieri to preserve it from being disgusting; and, furthermore, it also demands the most delicate, refined, and transcendent power in the actress to be tolerated in the representation. This Ristori most triumphantly achieves. From the opening scene to the tragic denouement, not a word, look, or action is there that could offend the most fastidious—we see but the victim of Fate struggling with even more than mortal energy under the decree of the incensed goddess. So thrillingly are these struggles embodied by Ristori that they fairly become realities to the spectator. Such intensity of grief, such horror and remorse as she exhibits, are new to the American stage, are phases of acting and character that we have never before witnessed.

Madame Ristori was ably supported throughout. Bozzo, as Ciniro, the father of Myrrha, gave a severely classic and finished picture which almost equalled in excellence the Myrrha of Ristori, while Mmes. Cottin and Casati, in the rôles of Cecri and Euriclea, were deserving of great praise.

Giacometti's new tragedy, "Marie Antoinette," is announced for performance on Monday evening of next week. This work was written especially for Madame Ristori, and will doubtless afford a fine scope for her tragic powers.

Wallack's Theatre opened on Wednesday evening of last week to a house filled to overflowing. The programme consisted of Craven's "Meg's Diversion" and Bernard's burlesque of the "Latest edition of Black-eyed Susan."

Mr. Craven is well known in this country as the author of that delightful bit of domestic drama the "Chimney Corner." As is customary with modern English plays, or the modern plays of any other nationality for the matter of that, the plot of "Meg's Diversion" is composed of the flimsiest materials, depending more upon its innate naturalness and

the talents of the actors to make a success of it. Mr. Wallack's company do it full justice. Mrs. Jennings displays in the rôle of Meg a vivacity and earnestness which her warmest admirers never could have supposed her capable of, while Messrs. Young and Polk, as the two Pidgeons; Mr. Gilbert, as Jeremy Crow; Mr. Ringgold as Ashley Merton, and Mrs. Winter and Ward as Cornelia and Mrs. Netwold, all went to make up a delightful performance. Mr. Young's Jasper Pidgeon is a really exquisite piece of acting; droll, humorous, pathetic by turns, and always true to nature.

The burlesque is a wonderfully stupid affair, containing hardly a pun, and what there are so exceedingly mediocre that they fail to excite in any way the risibilities of the audience. Miss Ranoe, a new London importation, makes the most there can be made of the part of William. Miss Gannon is a very sweet See-u-san. Holland the drollest of Doggrasses; Young the most absurd of Dame Hatlys. Of Mark Smith's *Capt. Crosstree* it is difficult to speak; a more thoroughly, utterly, and entirely funny piece of acting it would be difficult to imagine. The scenery both in the play and burlesque is remarkably fine, particularly so in the latter.

The theatre has undergone a complete change in the matter of decoration, &c. A rich crimson, picked out with gold and bordered with gray and green, is now the prevailing color, and gives a great air of elegance to the whole establishment.

Jefferson is still drawing crowded houses at the Olympic, but is to give place on the 14th to the "Midsummer Night's Dream," which is to be gotten up in splendid style.

Forrest has appeared during the week in the "Gladiator," "Richelieu," and "Richard III.," drawing crowded houses, and eliciting much applause. He is to give place shortly to Mrs. Julia Dean, who will appear in a round of her favorite characters.

At the New York Theatre we are to have the "Cuban sylph," Zoe, next week. Anything is a relief after the ponderosity of "Under the Gaslight."

Madame Fanny Janauschek, who has been termed "the Ristori of Germany" will make her first appearance in this country, at the Academy of Music, on Wednesday evening of next week, as "Medea."

The fickle gods would appear to have set their faces against the "Devil's Auction," so often has it been postponed; but on Thursday evening, after much preparation and great outlay, it really was presented, too late, unfortunately, for notice this week. There are wonderful stories afloat of the marvels that are to be exhibited in this diabolical work, to say nothing of the surprising beauty of the *danseuses*. Next week we will see.

SHUGGE.